# HISTORY OF LANSING A VISITOR'S GUIDE









#### **GREETINGS!**

As Mayor of Lansing, it is my pleasure to present A History of Lansing: Visitor's Guide and Tour, a brochure and booklet set with a walking tour guide and narrative on more than fifty historical sites within our city.

Lansing's focus on our future begins with a deep respect for our past. We are proud of nearly century-old monumental buildings. We are pioneers of the automobile industry. The first gas and steam engine was assembled here followed by the early automobiles by Ransom Eli Olds Motor Car Company.

This guide will take you through the golden era of Michigan's Capital City. The brochure lays out a self-guided tour of historical sites that pique the interest of residents and visitors alike, comprising commercial centers, religious buildings, government structures, residences, significant owners, and architectural styles. Each site's story is told by the booklet and on-site historical markers.

So admire the architecture as you look at each site up-close, and be sure to reflect on the history behind the facade that reveals the soul of each location. You'll discover fifty-seven more reasons to **Love Lansing!** 

MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY
Mount Hope Cemetery contains the

Sincerely,

Virg Bernero, Mayor City of Lansing



Virg Bernero, Mayor, City of Lansing and Tom Truscott, State Historical Commissioner at the Mt. Hope Cemetery Historical Marker dedication in 2009.



#### BRIEF HISTORICAL TIME LINE OF LANSING

**1836:** "Biddle City" platted by William and Jerry Ford where Lansing is today. The brothers sold plots to pioneers from Lansing, New York, with the promise of a fledgling city on the banks of the Grand River.

**1843:** First house in North Lansing built by Col. John W. Burchard who also built the first dam on the Grand River in Lansing.

1847: Lansing Township chosen for State Capital of Michigan.

City planned to be named the "Town of Michigan".

The First Capitol Building, a Greek Revival structure, was built in this year.

First bridge across the Grand River built on Main St along with the first Post Office, and the Seymour Hotel.

1848: Town name officially changed to "Lansing".

First Lansing newspaper: "The Free Press".

Michigan Avenue Bridge built.

1853: First Masonic Lodge formed.

1855: Michigan Female College opened.

Michigan Agricultural College (M.A.C.) was established to the east of the city.

1857: The Torrent Engine Company becomes Lansing's first organized fire responders.

1858: Turner-Dodge House constructed, designed by Darius B. Moon.

1859: City of Lansing incorporated with a population of about 3,000.

1861: First railroad, the Amboy, Lansing, & Traverse Bay RR opened.

1865: Lansing's first high school opened.

Lansing resident Luther B. Baker captures John Wilkes Booth.

1866: A. Clark & Company started manufacturing carriages.

The Jackson, Lansing, & Saginaw railroad opened, which would later become the Michigan Central Railroad.

1871: First Library Association was formed. Mark Twain visits Lansing.

1872: Lansing Gas Light Company established by E.F. Cooley.

1873: Mt. Hope Cemetery established.

First publication of the Lansing Journal.

1874: Lansing Woman's Club established.

1875: Old Central High School built at a cost of \$50,000.

The Great Ice Jam and Flood of 1875 hits Lansing (5 out of 6 bridges destroyed).

1879: New Capitol Building (started construction in 1874) dedicated by Elijah E. Myers, architect.

1880: Michigan School for the Blind opened in Lansing.

P.F. Olds built his first steam engines.

First Telephone Exchange.

Morgan B. Hungerford House built by architect Darius B. Moon.

1881: Lansing Wheelbarrow Works established, would become the largest wheelbarrow manufacturer in the nation.

1882: Old Capitol Building burns down.

1885: First horticultural school in the nation formed at M.A.C. by Liberty Hyde Bailey.

The City Waterworks was established.

Lansing Wheel Company opened by W.K. Prudden.

1886: R.E. Olds builds his first steam engine.

**1890:** City's population reached approx. 13,000.

The Central Methodist Church on Ottawa Street was built.

The first electric streetcar operated.

1893: Lansing Police Department formed.

John T. Hermann House built by architect J. Arthur Bailey.

1895: Lansing Fire Department formed.

**1896:** Woman's Hospital Association formed (which would become Sparrow Hospital in 1912). Patent for gas engines awared to R.E. Olds.

Woodbury-Kerns House built by architect Darius B. Moon.



1897: Olds Motor Vehicle Company formed and a patent for a new motor carriage was awarded to R.E. Olds.

1902: The Union Railroad Depot and the Grand Trunk Railroad Depot opened.

Michigan Manufacturers Association was formed.

1903: The Carnegie Library, funded by Andrew Carnegie and designed by Edwin A. Bowd, opened (Now part of Lansing Comm. Coll.).

1904: Great Flood of 1904 destroyed bridges and flooded large portions of downtown Lansing.

1915: Potter Park donated to the City of Lansing, would later become the first zoo in Michigan.

**1921:** The Strand Theater and Arcade opened.

1924: Old Newsboys Association formed to raise money for charity.

1931: Olds Tower constructed, now called Boji Tower.

1934: Kerns Hotel Fire killed 32 people. The Box 23 Club was soon established to provide volunteer assistance to the fire department.

**1937:** Knapps Department store built by the Christman Company.

1939: The Ottawa Street Power Station (now Accident Fund Insurance) built by architect Edwin A. Bowd.

1941-1946: The World War II period.

1942: Tin Can collection.

1951: State Office Building and home of State Library was set on fire.

1954: Frandor shopping center was built.

1955: Five millionth Oldsmobile was built.

1957: Lansing Community College was built.

1961: Jackson National Life Insurance Company was founded.

1970: Olds Freeway (I-496) was completed.

1972: The Thomas M. Cooley Law School is founded.

1978: The Grand River flood.

1983: The annual Celebration of Michigan Women.

Michigan Women's Hall of Fame, is founded by the Michigan Women's Studies Association.

1987: On January 26, Michigan celebrates 150 years of statehood.

1989: The Michigan Library and Historical Center is dedicated in Lansing.

1992: The State Capitol Building is fully restored and rededicated.

1996: Oldsmobile park was built (home of the Lansing Lugnuts).

2001: GM opens the Lansing Grand River Assembly plant, which builds the Cadillac CTS, STS, SRX and V-Series.

2002: Michigan elects its first female governor, Jennifer Granholm.

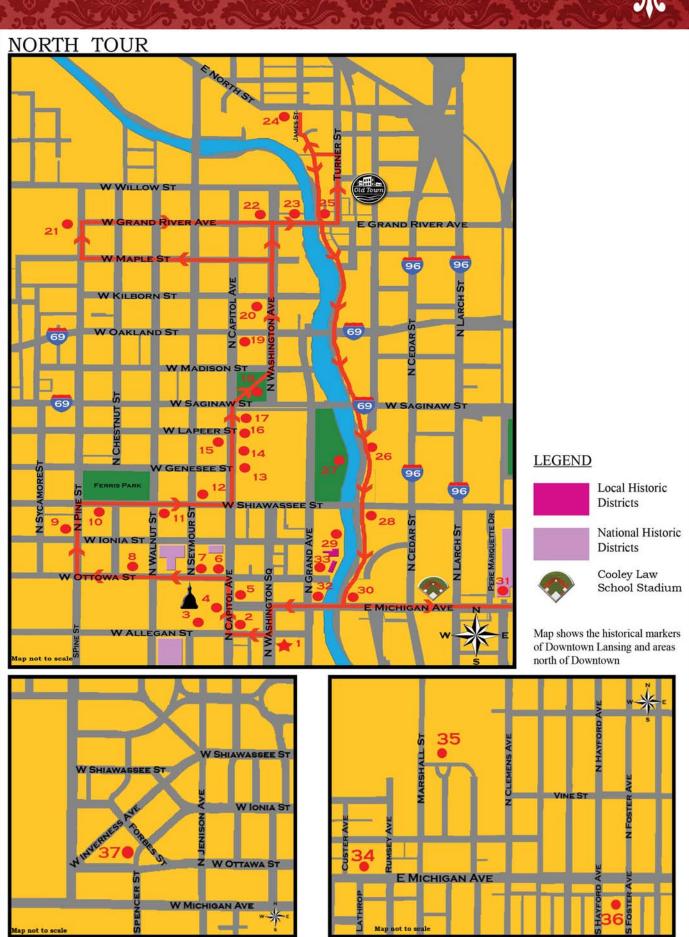
2004: Final production day for Oldsmobile.

2009: Lansing celebrates its Sesquicentennial (150 years).

#### ABOUT HISTORICAL MARKERS

Laura Ashlee, who authored more than 500 historical markers, talks about the importance of these markers in her book 'Travelling Through Time'. She says "Although one could think that marker applicants look back, I think they look to the future. Certainly they feel tied to the town settlers or the church founders or the school children who came before them. But, in fact, the marker is about the future. It's about continuity. It's about education. It's about fostering understanding for what people experienced as they built lives, communities, industries, and a nation. It's about appreciation of what we have now. And it's about doing something to build an appreciation for history so that people who read the markers now and in the future will also feel connected to those who came before." Here in this booklet, we present you the buildings and parks with historical markers along with some significant structures of the capital city of Lansing.









#### 1. Lansing's First Capitol Building

Early in 1847 three commissioners were appointed to select an appropriate site for the capitol in Lansing. The contract for construction was awareded on June 3, 1847. Building materials were shipped by boat on the Grand River or rail from Detroit to Jackson and by wagons on cut trails through the woods to Lansing. Gradually, the capitol rose on this site. It was described as "a church-like little structure of wood, painted white." The building measured 60 feet by 100 feet, was two stories high and had a cupola. A white picket fence set it off from the surrounding forest. It contained legislative and supreme court chambers, an office for the Governor, a few other offices and a library. Completed

in late 1847, it was used until the present capitol was completed in 1879.

#### 2. Capital Bank Tower

(205 W Allegan St)

The tower was originally constructed as the Olds Tower, named after the automotive industrialist, Ransom Eli Olds, who was the main financier of the tower project. Shortly thereafter it was renamed as the Capital National Bank Tower. It became the Michigan National Bank Tower in 1954, and held that name until 2001 when Michigan National Bank was bought out by Standard Federal Bank. At the request of Standard Federal Bank, the owners of the tower removed the historic neon 'Michigan National' sign in that year. After four-and-a-half years without a name, it was renamed Boji Tower in 2005 after the Boji family, a father and son development team of Iraqi descent, who had owned the tower since 1998. The tower has been through one major expansion which occurred between 1965 and 1967, which included the addition of an 11-story annex built directly adjacent to the front of the tower. The tower has undergone multiple minor renovations since 1998 under the Boji Group's ownership.



#### 3 & 4. State Capitol

This edifice, the center of government since 1879, is Michigan's third capitol. It replaced the frame building that was erected nearby in 1847, when the capital was moved from Detroit to Lansing. Construction began in 1872 on the new building, designed by Elijah Myers. It cost \$1,510,130 to build, and was dedicated January 1,1879, at a meeting addressed by six of Michigan's governors. The State Capitol of Michigan, rededicated in its centennial,1979, is the third structure to serve as the symbolic and functional center of state government. In 1837, when statehood was attained, the old Michigan Territorial Courthouse in Detroit became the first capitol. Twelve years later, the legislature voted to move Michigan's seat of government to Lansing, where a new capitol was erected. That frame building was soon found

inadequate. Then in 1871, Governer Henry P. Baldwin recommended the construction of a new capitol and the legislature concurred.

#### 5. Lansing City Hall

(124 W Michigan Ave)

The Lansing City Hall was designed by local architectural firm Kenneth C. Black Associated, Inc. in 1958. The building is an example of International style and is a key historic and architectural landmark in the City. The current City Hall replaced the former Richardson Romanesque city hall, which was a towered masonry building with magnificent and elaborate detailing. The current building was a keystone in modernizing the city by constructing other important public buildings in the 1950's by Mayor Ralph Crego.







#### 6. Central Methodist Church

(215 N Capitol Ave)

The first recorded Methodist meeting in Lansing was held in 1845 when the Reverend Lewis Coburn preached in the log cabin of Joab Page of North Lansing. In 1850 a Methodist class (congregation) was formed in what is now central Lansing. Its first leaderwas Reverend Resin Sapp, chaplain of the Michigan legislature. Services were held at Representative Hall in the old State Capitol. The same year, the state deeded land at the corner of Washington Avenue and Ottawa Street to the First Methodist Episcopal Church under Public Act No. 231 of 1848. That land was subsequently turned over to the Central Methodist Episcopal Church, which

built its first building in 1863. The present Romanesque-style edifice was erected in 1888-89 and is perhaps the only church designed by Elijah E. Myers, architect of the State Capitol.

#### 7. St. Paul Episcopal Church

(218 W Ottawa St)

In 1848, soon after the Michigan legislature relocated the state capital to Lansing Township, an Episcopal society met in the new capitol, located at Washington Avenue and Allegan Street. The society, which became a parish in 1856, erected its first church at the corner of North Washington Avenue and Ionia Street in 1859. A second, much larger church opened at the present location on October 20, 1873, three weeks after the cornerstone of the present capitol had been laid. This Neo-Gothic inspired church was erected in 1914.



Although plans for a church had been supplied by local architect Samuel D. Butterworth, revised plans of the Reverend Henry J. Simpson, rector, were used when the A. R. Cole Company built the church. The church complex includes a 1942 chapel, a 1952 parish house, and a 1967 education annex. The building is distinguished by its stained glass windows, installed in the 1940s-1960s, and wood carvings, crafted by German artisan Alois Lang.



#### 8. First Presbyterian Church

(510 W Ottawa St)

This church, Lansing's first congregation to affiliate nationally (with the Marshall Presbytery), was founded on December 17, 1847. It was organized by the Reverend Calvin Clark, an agent for the American Home Missionary Society. There were four members. The first pastor, the Reverend W. W. Atterbury, served from 1848 until May 1854. The congregation held its early services in a school, the legislative chambers of Lansing's first capitol, an inn, and a storage building called "God's Barn." It built its first permanent home, Lansing's first church edifice, in 1852. The congregation's first church, at the intersection of Genesee Street and Washington Avenue, housed the first bell in Lansing in its

fifty-five-foot tower. The bell was purchased with money raised by church women and was installed in 1856. For years it awakened Lansing, announced noon hour and curfew, and alerted firemen. The congregation's second church, at the intersection of Capitol Avenue and Allegan Street, was built in 1889. The church on this site, begun in 1947, was completed in 1953. The Molly Grove Chapel was added in 1984.



#### 9. Morgan B. Hungerford House

(602 W Ionia)

This Late Victorian house, designed by Darius B. Moon, was built by Morgan B. Hungerford in 1880. Hungerford (1830-1903) had arrived in the area in 1858. He farmed a large tract of land in what is now west Lansing and served one term as justice of the peace for Lansing Township. In 1958 Lansing realtor Marguerite Moore restored the house as a residence and office. It became an administrative office building of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan in 1984.







#### 10. Optometric Association

(530 W Ionia St)

The state's professional optometry organization was founded as the Michigan Optical Society in Muskegon in 1896. Benson W. Hardy, Jay W. Gould, Ernest Eimer, Nelson K. Standart, and Emil H. Arnold were its first directors. In 1904 the group was incorporated as the Michigan Society of Optometrists. It became the Michigan Optometric Association in 1945. The group moved its headquarters to Detroit in 1944 and to Lansing in 1956. Ninety years after its founding, the association included 670 practitioners of optometry.

#### 11. Michigan Society of Professional Engineers

(215 N Walnut St)

On May 10,1946, forty-five engineers from around the state met to organize the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers, which was incorporated on September 30, 1946. Michigan was the twenty-fourth state to organize such a society. The society promotes licensure of engineers as a safeguard to the public's life, health, and property. It includes engineers in government, industry, private practice, construction, and education. In 1987 the society had 2,550 members.





#### 12. Carnegie Library

(210 W Shiawassee St)

Andrew Carnegie credited libraries with opening the "treasures of knowledge and imagination through which youth may ascend." This belief led him to provide funding for more than 1,600 libraries across United States. The Lansing library was built in 1903 and designed by architect Edwin A. Bowd and is now a part of the Lansing Community College. Its simple style featured a classical facade that suggested a return to enlightened days of antiquity. The original interior included spaces with specific functions, such as the reading room, children's

room and an auditorium on second floor. The library's interiors reflected changing cultural attitudes towards the role of libraries in United States, as libraries put more emphasis on public access, especially children and adults. In 1902 steel magnet Andrew Carnegie offered Lansing \$35,000 to build a new public library. Persuaded by the tireless efforts of local women's groups, voters accepted his gift and agreed to pay \$3,500 annually to maintain the building. According to *The State Republican*, State Librarian Mary C. Spenser sought Carnegie's donation in the belief that "the future of any nation depends upon the intellectual development of its citizens." A crowd of eager residents were present to dedicate the new library on February 22, 1905. The library was valued as a resource for the general public, as well as students from the old Central High School, located on the same block. When the new community library was built in 1964, this building continued its educational role by becoming a part of Lansing Community College.



#### 13. Sophie Turner House (removed)

Sophie Scott Turner (1856-1941), a member of one of Lansing's pioneer families, built this house in 1927. Turner was considered one of the city's largest landholders, owning vast acreage in Lansing Township and around Potter Park and Mount Hope Cemetery. This Colonial Revival house, with its broad veranda, has been compared to George Washington's home, Mount Vernon. The Michigan Historical Museum was housed here from 1943 until 1979. In 1980 Lansing Community College acquired the property.



#### 14. John T. Herrmann House

(520 N Capitol Ave)

This English Tudor house was built in 1893 for John T. Herrmann, a Lansing tailor. Herrmann immigrated to Lansing from Bernsberg, Germany, in 1872 with his wife, Katharine, and two children, Henry and Christian. In 1878 John Herrmann opened the Herrmann Merchant Tailor Shop. After Herrmann's death in 1898, his sons took over the business. Designed by Lansing architect J. Arthur Bailey, this house remained in the Herrmann family until Lansing Community College purchased it in 1966 and renamed it the Herrmann Conference Center.

#### 15. Michigan Sheriffs' Association

(515 N Capitol Ave)

In December 1877 twenty-four county sheriffs met in Lansing and formed the Michigan State Sheriffs' Association-committed to devising "ways and means for assisting each other in the detention, arrest and conviction of criminals." In 1893 the group joined other law enforcement officials and formed the Michigan Association of Police, Sheriffs and Prosecuting Attorneys. In 1931 the sheriffs incorporated independently as the Michigan Sheriffs' Association.



#### 16. Rogers-Carrier House

(528 N Capitol Ave)

Lansing architect Darius B. Moon built this Queen Anne-style house in 1891 for realtor H. M. Rogers. Purchased by Lansing merchant M. R. Carrier in 1905, the house was occupied by the Carrier family until 1964. In 1966 Lansing Community College bought the structure. Students of the architectural studies center began restoring it in 1982. The restoration included

redesigning and reconstructing the turret that previously had been removed.

#### 17. Lansing Community College

(610 N Capitol Ave)

Lansing Community College was established on April 8, 1957, by the Lansing Public Schools. It opened that fall with 425 students and sixteen faculty members. It offered civil mechanical and electronics technologies as well as practical nursing and apprenticeship programs. In 1961 the college began year-round operation. The Lansing Community College District was formed by a vote of area citizens in 1964. The Board of Trustees was organized and six members were elected at that time. The first off-campus learning center



was established in 1971. In its thirtieth year of operation the college provided lifelong education and training in more than two hundred academic programs to a student body numbering over forty-three thousand.





#### 18. Durant Park

(NW corner of Washington Ave & Saginaw St)

William C. Durant was one of Michigan's most important industrialists and the founder of the General Motors Corporation. In 1919 Durant purchased this three-acre city block, once the estate of F. Mortimer Cowles, an Eaton Rapids carpenter who worked on the state capitol. Durant hired Kalamazoo landscape contractor Charles Maxson to create an urban park. In 1921 Durant donated the property to the city of Lansing as a park for north side residents. The park included flowerbeds and trees, serpentine concrete pathways, and a circular fountain basin in the center of the park. A parade marked the dedication on June 23, 1921.

The Durant Park Arch was erected by the city of Lansing in 1924 in gratitude to automobile magnate William C. Durant, who donated this park to the city in 1921. The Lansing-based Christman Company built the arch. The monument is built of brick masonry and Indiana limestone. This architectural monument is the only one of its kind in Lansing. It was restored in 2004. (www.waymarking.com)



#### 19. Michigan Pharmacists Association

(408 Kalamazoo Plaza)

On November 14, 1883, seventy-seven druggists met in the state capitol to organize the Michigan state pharmacists association. Jacob Jesson of Muskegon led the effort to establish a professional association to participate in national professional organization and secure legislation to regulate drug distribution and pharmacist licensure. By 1886 the association boasted 971 members. It changed the name to Michigan Pharmacists Association in 1973.

# 20. Michigan Education Building/Michigan Association of Counties

(935 N Washington Ave)

When completed in 1928, this building marked the Michigan Education Association's 75th anniversary. The Lansing architectural firm of Warren Holmes-Powers Company designed the Neo-Georgian structure. The symmetry, limestone quoining, projecting entrance and broken pediment topping the center second story window typify the style. The Michigan Education Association was organized in Ann Arbor in 1847. In 1988, the Michigan Education Association Building became the headquarters of Michigan Association of Counties.



In 1898, township and city officials met in the capitol and founded the Michigan State Association of Supervisors (MSAS). The group acted as a liaison between the legislature and county government and worked statewide rather than for parochial interests. In the 1950s a director was hired and an office opened in a quonset hut at Michigan State University (MSU), East Lansing. In 1957, the Institute of Local Government merged with the MSAS. In December 1969 the group adopted the name Michigan Association of Counties.



#### 21. Michigan School for the Blind

(715 W Willow Ave)

Michigan began educating the blind in 1859 at Flint's Michigan Asylum. In 1879 the legislature established the Michigan School for the Blind, which opened here on September 29, 1880, with thirty-five students. The next year, five students were its first graduates. At first, students learned by lecture/demonstration, but in 1884-85 the school introduced braille reading and writing.



The first deaf/blind student was enrolled in 1887. By the 1950s the school boasted its largest enrollment, three hundred children in kindergarten through grade 12. Students activities have included music, drama and track. In 1961 and 1963 student wrestlers won class B state championships.

#### 22. North Presbyterian Church

(108 W Grand River Ave)

On October 19, 1863, fourteen members of Lansing's First Presbyterian Church signed the Articles of Association creating the Franklin Street Church Society. The society acquired a lot for a church from James Turner, a merchant and leading Methodist, with the proviso that the Presbyterians would supply Lower Town (now North Lansing) with gospel preaching. The first Franklin Street Presbyterian Church was dedicated on this site on October 3, 1865. Built in 1915-16 on the site of the congregation's first church, the Franklin Avenue Presbyterian Church was constructed to accommodate North Lansing's growing population.



Edwyn Bowd, Lansing's leading architect of public buildings in the early twentieth century, designed the church and manse. The extensive Arts and Crafts detailing is unusual among Michigan churches of this period. The congregation changed its name when Franklin Avenue became Grand River Avenue in 1934.



#### 23. North Lansing Dam & Brenke Fish Ladder

On the River Walk south of Old Town and east of North Washington and Grand River are the dam and the fish ladder. The original dam was built in 1843 then in 1936 the present dam was constructed by the Board of Water and Light as a source of power for hydroelectricity. In 1981, the Brenke Fish Ladder was constructed to allow fish the opportunity to travel up stream on Grand River without injury. The fish ladder is a peaceful place to visit along the riverside of the ladder for catching catfish, carp, sunfish, and other smaller species of fish that inhabit the River.

#### 24. Turner-Dodge House

(100 E North Street)

Gracefully situated high on the bank of the Grand River, this Classic Revival-style mansion, built in 1858, was the home of prominent Lansing merchant James Turner (1820-1869). In 1899 Turner's son-in-law Frank L. Dodge (1853-1929) bought and enlarged it. The three-storied building, designed by Lansing architect Darius Moon, features stately wooden Ionic columns and a decorative cornice. Its interior, with its large classic doorways and several fire-places, is adorned with beveled and leaded French windows.



After remaining in the family for a century, the property was purchased by the Great Lakes Bible College in 1958. In 1974 the city of Lansing acquired it for a park. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.



#### 25. Old Town Lansing

(Grand River Ave & Turner St)

Located at the northern end of Lansing, Old Town overlooks the Grand River. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was established in the mid-19th century. It is the oldest of the three original villages of what is now present day Lansing. This area contains the first home built in Lansing by James Seymour and his family in 1843.



After a long decline brought about by economic changes in the area, Old Town is now a mix of art galleries, restaurants, antique and specialty stores, as well as several marketing and design firms. With events such as the Festival of the Moon and Sun and the JazzFest and BluesFest, Old Town has emerged in the last twenty years as a center of arts and culture for the greater Lansing area. (lansingdowntown.com)

#### 26. Riverwalk, Grand River

(Museum Drive)

The Grand River and its valley were formed by the melting of the continental glacier that retreated from this area some twelve thousand years ago. Known by Chippewa Indians as "Washtanong" (further country) and by the French as "le Riviere Grand," the Grand is Michigan's longest river. From its headwaters in northern Hillsdale and southern Jackson Counties, it flows 270 river miles and drops 460 feet in elevation before entering Lake Michigan at Grand Haven. Together with its tributaries, it drains a 5,570 square-mile watershed, including all or part of eighteen counties. Lansing is located in the upper portion of the river basin where the Grand changes direction from northward to westward. The Red Cedar



changes direction from northward to westward. The Red Cedar River, one of seven major tributaries, enters one mile upstream from here.



#### 27. Lansing Riverfront Park

(N Grand Ave)

The Grand River has been an important source and travel route throughout Michigan's past. To the Indians, the Grand River provided a route for travel and trade and a valley for hunting and agriculture. Seventeenth-century French explorers were the first Europeans to see the river. In the eighteenth century French, British and American fur traders canoed the Grand and its tributaries. The journal of Detroit fur trader Hugh Heward, who passed by the site in 1790, is thought to be the first written record of travel near present-day Lansing. In the mid-ninteenth century the Grand became an important means of transportation for logs and lumber. in the twentieth century the waters of the Grand have been used for industrial and agricultural production, as well as recreation.

### **28.** Lansing City Market (new construction) (325 City Market Drive)

Dancing and fiddling heralded the opening of the Lansing City Market on August 25, 1938. Built by the Granger Construction Company, and partly financed by the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration, the market typified depression-era municipal projects. The first city-sponsored market opened at North Grand Avenue and East Shiawassee Street in 1909 after the North Side Commercial Club blocked off Turner Street twice a week and showed the city council that a



farmers' market could succeed. The marker for the original building is located inside the newly-constructed City Market building.





#### 29. Ottawa Street Power Station

(200 N Grand Ave)

The engineering design of the plant was by Ralph C. Roe and Allen Burns of the firm of Burns and Roe, and represented an improvement over the design of the Bremo Station in Virginia, which the two had designed while employed at Electric Management and Engineering Company. The architectural design was by Edwyn A. Bowd of Bowd and Munson. This unique design was completed in 1939 with multi-tone face brick and granite to represent coal fire from the power generating process. Bowd

and Munson concealed the original smoke stacks within the façade of a modern office building of the period. "Moderne" in style, the building also exhibits the angularity and step backs which are characteristic of the Art Deco style. The station was decommissioned in 1999 and has been renovated and converted to an office building as part of a major project for the Accident Fund Insurance Company of America being completed along the Grand River. (www.michiganarchitecturalfoundation.org)

#### 30. Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame

(333 E Michigan Ave)

Greater Lansing Area Sports Hall of Fame, located in the Lansing Center, was established to honor our nation's first 200 years through the celebration of Mid-Michigan's athletic legacy. The Lansing Center in downtown Lansing features a Plaza along the Lansing River Walk. The building was designed by Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum (HOK) in 1987, and renovated in 1995 by Hobbs + Blacks Associates. The Center serves as a gateway to the heart of the State Capital, and hosts a large variety of events and functions.



#### 31. Union Depot

(637 E Michigan Ave)

The Union Depot began passenger service for the Michigan Central and Pere Marquette Railroads in 1902. The Detroit architectural firm of Spier and Rohns, which planned many Michigan Central stations, designed the building with Chateauesque conical towers and cut stone arches. The depot closed in 1972. Restaurateur Pete Jubeck bought the building in 1978 and transformed it into an eatery, retaining the quarter-sawn oak interior and installing locally crafted stained glass windows.

#### 32. The Kerns Hotel Fire /The Box 23 Club

(NE Corner of Michigan Ave and Grand Ave)

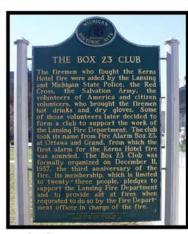
At 5:30 A.M. on December 11,1934, the fire alarm outside the Kerns Hotel sounded. The 211-room, four-story brick hotel that stood on this site had 215 registered guests. Before the last embers of the fire were extinguished, thirty-two people were known dead and forty-four, including fourteen firemen, had been injured. Two of the injured people died later. Among the dead were seven Michigan legislators and five unidentified people. Many guests escaped by descending four fire ladders,

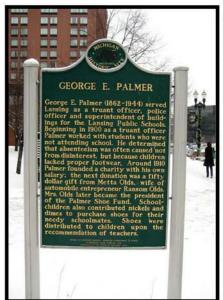


and eight people jumped into life nets. However, the fire spread through the hotel's wooden interior so rapidly that many people were trapped in their rooms. Seventy-two members of the ninety-seven-man Lansing fire force fought the fire using eight of the force's eleven pieces of fire apparatus.



The firemen who fought the Kerns Hotel fire were aided by the Lansing and Michigan State Police, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Volunteers of America, and citizen volunteers, who brought the firemen hot drinks and dry gloves. Some of those volunteers later decided to form a club to support the work of the Lansing Fire Department. The club took its name from Fire Alarm Box 23, at Ottawa and Grand, from which the first alarm for the Kerns Hotel fire, was sounded. The Box 23 Club was formally organized on December 11, 1937, the third anniversary of the fire. Its membership, which is limited to twenty-three people, pledges to support the Lansing Fire Department and to provide aid at fires when requested to do so by the fire department officer in charge of the fire.





#### 33. George Palmer/Old Newsboys Association

(NE corner of Grand and Michigan Ave)

George E. Palmer (1862-1944) served Lansing as a truant officer, police officer, and Superintendent of building of Lansing Public Schools. Beginning in 1900 he worked with students who were not attending school. He determined that absenteeism was often caused not from disinterest, but because children lacked proper footwear. Around 1910 Palmer founded a charity with his own salary to provide footware to the students. In 1924 the Old Newsboys Association, led by its first president, Guy Brownson, was organized to assist in the efforts begun by Palmer. They cooperated with the *State Journal* and the *Lansing Capital News* to publish and sell a spoof newspaper during a one-day fund-raising drive. Clergy, educators, businessmen, politicians, and other citizens joined the effort. Since 1932 the *State Journal* has printed the humorous tabloid annually hawked by Old Newsboys on area streets. During the 1990s the paper's one-day circulation reached over one hundred thousand copies. The Old Newsboys' mission remains to provide shoes and boots for needy schoolchildren.

#### 34. Church of Resurrection

(1529 E Michigan Ave)

On June 15, 1922, the most Reverend Michael J. Gallagher, bishop of Detroit, sent Father John A. Gabriels to Lansing to establish a Catholic parish east of the Pere Marquette railroad tracks that would include East Lansing, Okemos and Haselett. Father Gabriels named the parish Resurrection, because he believed this was the most important event in the Christ's life and the cornerstone of Christianity. He celebrated the first mass on Christmas morning 1922, in the basement church, which would become a school. In



1926 two stories were added with classrooms for eight grades. Five Dominican sisters were the first teachers. Parishioners worshipped in the basement church until the present church was built in 1952.

In 1906 John A. Gabriels (1881-1960) was ordained a catholic priest. In 1922 he came from Detroit to establish new parish and become chaplain of the Boys Vocational School. He became a highly respected citizen of Lansing. He was chaplain of the Michigan State Police, a member of the Knights of Columbus, Chamber of Commerce, a popular Old Newsboy, and established Father John's Fund for Needy Children. In 1934 he delivered Lansing's first radio-broadcasted mass. The programs became weekly in 1937. Father Gablriels was bestowed the title Right Reverend Monsignor in 1944. In 1956 he was honored at a testimonial banquet by many civic leaders including the Governor of Michigan. Father John loved and served all people. He was well known as a leader, storyteller, radio preacher, and convert maker.





#### 35. Marshall Street Armory

(330 Marshall St)

The Armory was originally constructed in 1924, for the first battalion 119th Field Artillery Unit. The Armory has an extended admirable history in sending men and women into major conflicts and wars of United States. The building served as an armory for almost 90 years, until 2005, when the last Michigan Army National Guard Field Artillery Unit moved out. After that the building was occupied by the employees of guard and Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs. For years the

building facility was used as a stage for civilian events, weddings, along with celebrated boxing matches and as a dance hall for Michigan State University, East Lansing. In 2008, the building was decommissioned by the military. Now the Armory is historically restored, preserved and retrofitted so as to act as a home for various local non-profit organizations. The historic preservation of this remarkable and esteemed building was done by the Gillespie Group. (www.marshallstreetarmory.net)

#### 36. Lansing Fire Station No. 8

(2300 E Michigan Ave. SE corner of Hayford St)

Lansing architects Bowd-Munson Company designed Fire Station No. 8, which opened in June 1931. The fire hall was built by H. G. Christman Company. Fire fighters lived in upper two floors, and the community used the large room in the basement for weddings, meetings, and voting. In 1977 the city sold the building to the Lansing Civic Players Guild. The troupe renovated the structure that year, in time for the 49th season.



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#### 37. Wolverine Boys State: American Legion

(212 N Verlinden)

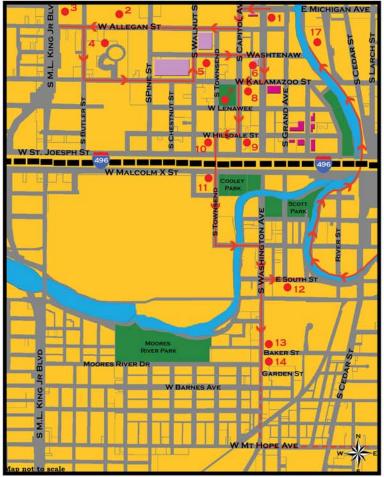
On November 28, 1937, the board of directors of The American Legion established Wolverine Boys State. American Legion departments in other states, including Ohio and Indiana, had existing programs. The American Legion sought to teach citizenship and leadership to boys by training them in the fundamental principles of American government. Individual legion posts sponsored local boys who were "mentally alert, vigorous and enthusiastic and honest and thrifty." The first Boy's State was held in Michigan State College (present day Michigan State University) in East Lansing. Posts sent 800 boys at a cost of \$12.50 each for the 10 day event. In 1946, Boys Nation was organized.

#### Wolverine Girls' State: American Legion Auxiliary

In 1941 the Women of American Legion Auxiliary established Wolverine Girls' State. The organization's original purpose was "to find and develop girls who show inherent tendencies towards leadership. "The first Girls' State meeting was held in June 1941 at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. The eight-day program included sessions on entertaining, etiquette, drama, nursing, art and music appreciation and citizenship. In 1952, to accommodate women's changing roles, the auxiliary shifed the organization's focus to inform girls about the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship and self-government. Girls' Nation was established in 1947.



#### SOUTH TOUR





#### **LEGEND**

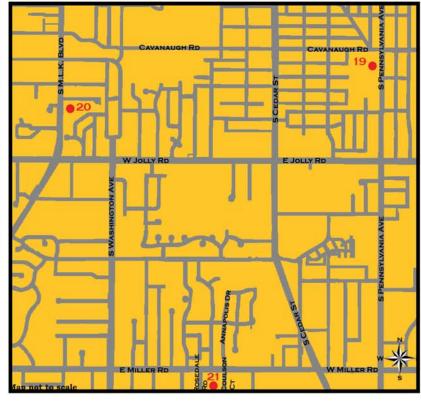
Local Historic Districts



Map above shows the historical markers of the South Tour



Map above shows the historical markers of South Lansing.







#### 1. The Strand

(217 S Washington St)

On April 21, 1921, this building opened as the Strand Theater and Arcade. The two-thousand-seat theater boasted one of the largest vaude-ville stages in the state and a screen for viewing motion pictures. The building was the pride of theater mogul Walter J. Butterfield and one of three hundred theaters created by Chicago architect John Eberson, who designed the interior in a French theme with a blue sky and filmy clouds painted on the ceiling. The arcade's office suites, bowling alleys, ballroom, and 14 stores, including Cindrella Tea Shop and the Palace of Sweet Candy Shop, made the arcade one of Lansing's most distinctive commercial spaces. In 1941 the theatre was renovated and renamed the Michigan, it was closed in 1980.

## 2. The Michigan Veterans' Memorial Park & Vietnam Monument

(Between Ottawa & Allegan)

The Michigan Veterans' Memorial Park & Vietnam Monument is a public memorial honoring those who have served in the United States Military. The Michigan Veterans' Memorial Park Commission is responsible for establishing procedures for the use of the Memorial Park and Monument which is managed and maintained by Department of Management & Budget (DMB). The memorial is a steel arc which is 120 feet long and 10 feet tall, inscribed with the names of the 2,654 killed from Michigan. There also is a curved seating area with 55 lights representing those killed from other states and possessions as well as those still missing.



(www.michigan.gov/documents/Veterans\_\_Memorial] Brochure\_Approved\_115936\_7.pdf)



#### 3. Hall of Justice

(925 W Ottawa St)

Hall of Justice was dedicated on October 8, 2002, as the first permanent home for the judicial branch of government in the state's history. It is a six-story, limestone-clad edifice with a gently curved principal façade. Covered arcades extend toward the street, and give visitors access to parking beneath the plaza. Built of limestone and capped by a glass dome, the six-story Hall of Justice stands at the

west end of the capitol mall. The interior spaces of the Hall of Justice are organized around the circular, colonnaded lobbies on each floor. All major spaces within the building radiate from these lobbies. Facing the State Capitol, it stands independent yet in relation to the location of the executive and legislative branches of government.

#### 4. Michigan Historical Center

(717 W Allegan St)

An ingenious combination of classical and modern architectural elements, the Center is the state's first public building expressly designed to accommodate commissioned artworks. Architect William Kessler incorporated materials native to Michigan throughout the Center. Literally built around a Michigan white pine tree, the facility features a copper-clad outdoor courtyard, white oak doors, limestone exterior and polished granite walls. Glass atriums add sunlight and a feeling of spaciousness to the library and museum.







#### 5. State Bar of Michigan

(306 Townsend St)

The State Bar of Michigan was established by the legislature in 1939 as an organization dedicated to improving the administration of justice and the delivery of legal services. Every lawyer licensed to practice in Michigan is required to be the member. The organization is under the supervision of the Michigan Supreme Court. Before 1935 lawyers could join the Michigan State Bar Association, which was organized in 1890. The State Bar made this building its headquarters in 1950. A four-story addition was completed in 1979. The state Bar of Michigan's guiding principle, expressed by its first

president, Roberts P. Hudson, is "No organization of lawyers can long survive which has not for its primary object the protection of the public."

#### 6. J.W.Knapp's Building

(300 S Washington Ave)

Commonly known as Knapp's Department Store, the building was designed in the Art Moderne style. It was a dramatic departure from the surrounding architecture and for architects Bowd & Munson, whose other works include Spartan Stadium and Cooley Law School. Its sleek and streamline features are characteristic of Art Moderne. Art Moderne is often confused with Art Deco, which was popular during the same time period. The most distancing feature between the two is that Art Moderne uses horizontal orientation and Art Deco uses vertical orientation.



This building is one of the best examples of Art Moderne architecture anywhere in Michigan.



#### 7. Reutter Park

Reutter Park is one of several city-block size parks in and around downtown Lansing that were a part of the "City Beautiful" movement in architecture and urban planning in the late 19th and early 20th century.

#### 8. Capital Area District Public Library

(401 S Capitol Ave)

The Capital Area District Library serves most of Ingham County except the City of East Lansing. CADL operates thirteen libraries and a bookmobile, which stops throughout the County. All of these locations share resources and provide residents of each community with access to all materials and services offered by Capital Area District. The Library is the main branch for the district. It has a flat roof design, cantilevered entrance canopy and precast decorative concrete panels that make up the façade of this 1960s design.







#### 9. Michigan Manufacturers Association

(620 S Capitol Ave)

Since its 1902 founding, the Michigan Manufacturers Association (MMA) has dealt with many important business issues. It is a voluntary, nonprofit organization dedicated to promote the welfare of Michigan Industry to manufacturers about such ongoing concerns as taxation, workers compensation, and unemployment insurance. Beginning in 1908 the MMA organized employers to establish a system for compensating injured workers. In 1912 based on a

proposal authored by the MMA, Michigan's first Workers Compensation Act became a law. In 1943 the MMA became the first such association in the nation to offer group insurance programs to its members.

#### 10. Woodbury-Kerns House

(606 Townsend St)

Darius B. Moon, prominent turn-of-the century Lansing architect, designed this Queen Anne house in 1896 for Chester E. Woodbury, founder of the Lansing Capitol Savings and Loan Association. The structure's last residential owner was William G. Kerns, who owned the Kerns Hotel, which stood in North Grand Avenue. Kerns' family sold the house to Michigan State Medical Society in 1951. Extensively remodeled in 1951, the house is one of the few remaining structures designed by Moon. It became the State headquarters of the Michigan Democratic Party in 1977.





#### 11. Oldsmobile Company (Now GM Plant)

(Corner of Malcom X and Townsend St)

On a site southwest of here, production of the Curved Dash Oldsmobile Runabout began on December 16, 1901. The model was first produced in Detroit in 1900, but much of the assembly was shifted to Lansing after a fire destroyed the Detroit plant. The Curved Dash built from 1900 to 1904, was the first car to carry the name Oldsmobile. With a 66-inch wheel-base it weighed about 650 pounds.



It was powered by a one-cylinder, seven-horse power engine and cost \$650. It was the first car built using a progressive assembly system The company produced 425 vehicles in 1901, 2,500 in 1902, 4,000 in 1903 and 5,508 in 1904. For a time the Runabout was the best-selling model in the United States. In 1905 it inspired Gus Edward's to write the song "In My Merry Oldsmobile."

Across the street from the Michigan's Women Hall of Fame, 230 W Malcom X Street.

#### 12. Grand Trunk Depot

Built in 1902, this castle-like building with its square tower was the Lansing station for the Grand Trunk Western Railroad until 1971. For decades passengers streamed through its doors. Here servicemen left for and returned from military duty. Children and adults alike associated this depot with the excitement of travel and vacations. The city's joys and sorrows were reflected in this rail station; greetings and goodbyes were its most vital ingredients. But gradually rail travel ebbed. Renovated as a restaurant in 1972, the building's exterior remains unchanged. Gerald R. Ford, the thirty-eighth president of the United States, dined here during a "whistle stop" campaing tour on May 15, 1976.









#### 13. Reo Motor Car Company

In 1904 Ransom Eli Olds founded the REO Motor Car Company and built a factory on this site. In 1897 Olds had organized the Olds Motor Vehicle Company, the forerunner of Oldsmobile. REO soon became a leading automobile producer. The REO Motor Truck Company was formed in 1910, and production of the popular Speed Wagon soon began. REO offered the first practical automatic transmission in 1933; however, the depression-era economy brought an end to car production in 1936. The company focused instead on commercial and military vehicles under the name REO Motors. Diamond Trucks merged with REO in 1967, resulting in Diamond REO Trucks, Inc. The maker of "The World's Toughest Truck" closed in 1975.

Despite its designation as a National Historic Landmark, the plant was razed in 1979 to make way for new industry.

Built in 1917, the REO Clubhouse was the cultural hub of Lansing, hosting free movies, wedding receptions, basketball games, dress balls and patriotic gatherings during the First and Second World Wars. It was also home of Lansing's first radio station, WREO, which went on the air in 1921. Known as the "Temple of Leisure," the building comprised a two thousand-person capacity dining room, an auditorium, a library, four bowling alleys, a fireproof movie booth, and smoking lounging and billiard rooms. Use of the clubhouse by employees was one of the policies implemented by REO to cultivate the loyalty of its workers. Years after the Diamond REO plant closed in 1975, former employees recalled the sense of family fostered by the company. The clubhouse was razed in 1979.

#### 14. Mug & Brush Bulding

(1501 S Washington Ave)

The Mug & Brush is one of the smallest free-standing barbershops in North America. Originally constructed as a gas station, the simple structure with its red tile roof is an iconic example of the early full-service auto centers.

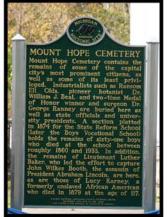




#### 15. Mt Hope Cemetery

(1709 Mt Hope Ave)

Mt. Hope Cemetery was built as Lansing's new city cemetery in June 1874 on what was formerly the John Miller Farm. Between 1874 and 1881 the city vacated the Lansing City Cemetary, located on the site of what would become Oak Park, and moved roughly 1000 graves to Mount Hope. Fredrick W. Higgins, superintendent of Detroit's Woodmere Cemetery, planned the drives and Harry Lee Bancroft, Lansing Cemetery superintendent and director of Parks & Recreation from 1914 to 1957, the developed landscape over many years. The rolling terrain, curving drives, and variety and profusion of monuments reflects cemetery design concepts of the mid-19th century.



A large obelisk, the city's Civil War soldiers' monument was dedicated in 1878 on one of the highest points in the cemetery. Mt. Hope Cemetery contains the remains of some of the capital city's most prominent citizens as well as some of its least privileged. Industrialists such as Ransom Eli Olds, pioneer botanist Dr. William J . Beal and two-time Medal of Honor winner and surgeon Dr. George Ranney are burried here as well as state officials and university presidents. A section platted in in 1874 for State Reform School (later the Boys Vocational School) holds the remains of 61 boys who died at the school between roughly 1860 & 1933. In addition the remains of Lieutenant Luther Baker, who led the effort to capture John W. Booth (the assasin of President Abrahim Lincoln) are here, as are those of Lucy Karney, a formerly enslaved African American who died in 1879 at the age of 117.



#### 16. Potter Park Zoo

(1301 S Pennsylvania Ave)

The zoo encompasses over 20 acres and features more than 500 individual animals representing approximately 160 different species. It is an accredited member of the association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) and participant in its Species Survival Plan (SSP) programs. The Zoo is committed to the preservation of endangered animals. In 1915 J.W. and Sarah Potter donated 58 acres of land to the City of Lansing which later became the Potter Park and will celebrate its 100th birthday in 2020.



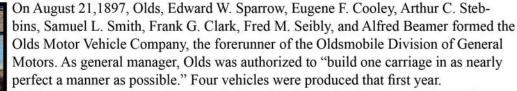
(www.potterparkzoo.org)

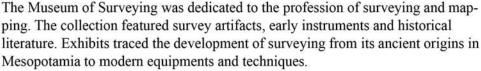


# 17. Ransom Eli Olds Transportation Museum/Michigan Museum of Surveying / Impression 5 Science Center

(240 Museum Drive)

Born in Geneva, Ohio, Ransom E. Olds came to Lansing in 1880. He worked in his father's machine and repair shop, where he experimented with small steam engines. In 1887 Olds drove, for a distance of one block, Lansing's first automobile; an experimental steam vehicle. He continued to work with steam, gasoline and electric power. Eventually, he produced a gasoline-powered vehicle that seated four persons and could do eighteen miles per hour on level ground.





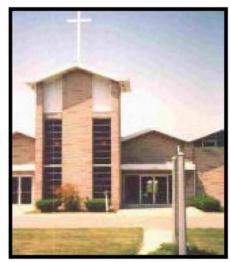
Impression 5 Science Center is a dynamic, interactive space for families to play, create, and challenge their understanding of science. The hands-on learning environment of Impression 5 opened in 1972. "Impression 5" still refers to the five senses and the way that each sense is engaged during a visit to the Science Center.



#### 18. Trinity A.M.E. Church

(3500 W Holmes Rd)

Trinity African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church of Lansing is the oldest black church in the city. The first services were held in a building on North Washington Ave. The church, formally organized by the Reverend Mr. Henderson of the British Methodist Episcopal Church in 1866, was first called the Independent Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1875 it was recognized as Bethel A.M.E. Church. In 1902 upon the death of Reverend George R. Collins, the pastor for many years, the church was renamed as George R. Collins A.M.E. Church. It was incorporated in 1906. The church received its present name, Trinity A.M.E. Church, in 1964. During the church's first decade, the congregation purchased a small frame building and moved it to a site on the 100 block of North Pine Street. In 1877, a modest brick church was erected near the original site. It served the congregation for 88 years.



In 1965 the congregation was forced to relocate to make room for the State Capitol Complex building project. Selling its downtown property to the state, Ingham County's oldest black congregation then moved to this 10-acre tract, where it built a church and a patronage. Starting with 21 members, the church had over 400 members by its one-hundredth anniversary in 1966.





#### 19. Michigan Retail Hardware Association

(4414 S Pennsylvania Ave, at Cavanaugh St)

With the philosophy "in union there is strength," 20 Michigan hardware retailers convened in Detroit on July 9, 1895, and organized Michigan Retail Hardware Association. Frank S. Carlton of Calumet was elected the first president. The group worked toward the enactment of state and national legislation on behalf of retail, wholesale and manufacturing trades. The first success was the passage in 1897 of a state mechanics lien law.

Hardware retailers in attendance at the association's organizational meeting in 1895 were: R. B. Bloodgood, C.F. Bock, L. B. Brockett, F. S. Carlton, Thomas Harvey, George W. Hubbard, T. Frank Ireland, H. C. Minnie, J. H. Moyes, John Popp, J. B. Sperry, N. B. Wattles, Henry C. Weber, S. L. Boyce and Son, Casper

Gnau and Co., Edwards and Chamberlin, Foster, Stevens Company, John W. Jochim Co., McDonnell Hardware, and Scott Brothers and Delisle.

#### 20. Malcolm X Homesite

(4705 S MLK Blvd, SE corner of Vincent Ct in front of Regency Townhomes) Malcolm X, born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1925, lived on this site in 1930s. His early life was marked by the violent death of his father, the Reverend Earl Little, on the Michigan Ave streetcar tracks. Under severe economic stress, the family was separated, and in 1937, Malcolm was sent to Mason. After a public school teacher discouraged his ambition of becoming a lawyer, Malcolm at fifteen left for Boston and New York. He became involved in street crime and was arrested in Massachusetts. In prison he was converted to the teaching of Elijah Muhammad and read widely in history and philosophy. He also developed



an understanding of black self-hatred and came to see his years in Lansing as common to black experience. Released in 1952, he joined his family in Detroit, and began his new life as a Muslim. When his talent for preaching was recognized, he moved to New York to head Temple Eleven. He founded the Nation of Islam's weekly newspaper, *Muhammad Speaks*, and travelled the country organizing new temples among its followers. In 1959 a television program brought him to public attention as the principal minister of the Nation. Preaching black pride and autonomy, he openly articulated the extent of racial discontent in our society. He broke with the Nation in 1964 and founded Muslim Mosque, Incorporated. A trip to Africa in the same year helped him enlarge his thinking on international problems. By 1965 when he was assassinated, he had become an eloquent spokesman for the oppressed everywhere. His influence continues through his recorded speeches and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, a landmark of twentieth-century social thought.



#### 21. Roswell Everett House

(131 W Miller Rd)

Roswell Everett, a native of New York State, came to Michigan in 1834. In 1841 he moved to Ingham County and soon after built this Greek Revival house. Everett (1790-1871) is credited with naming Delhi Township, which he helped organize in 1842. Everett held many public offices, serving as the first township treasurer and assessor, and later as justice of the peace and township supervisor. In 1846 the organizational meeting for School District No. 2, which became known as Everett district, was held here.

Classes were held in a shanty located on the farm. Lansing's Everett High School is named for Roswell Everett's family.

Roswell Everett built this house in 1841-44. Like many other people who migrated to Michigan from New York State, Everett built his house in Greek Revival style, which was popular there. Everett hosted official meeting in his home including those of Delhi District No. 2 School Board. For 40 years children met in the school-house located on the property.



For more visit: www.lansingmi.gov/pnd/hdc/index.jsp

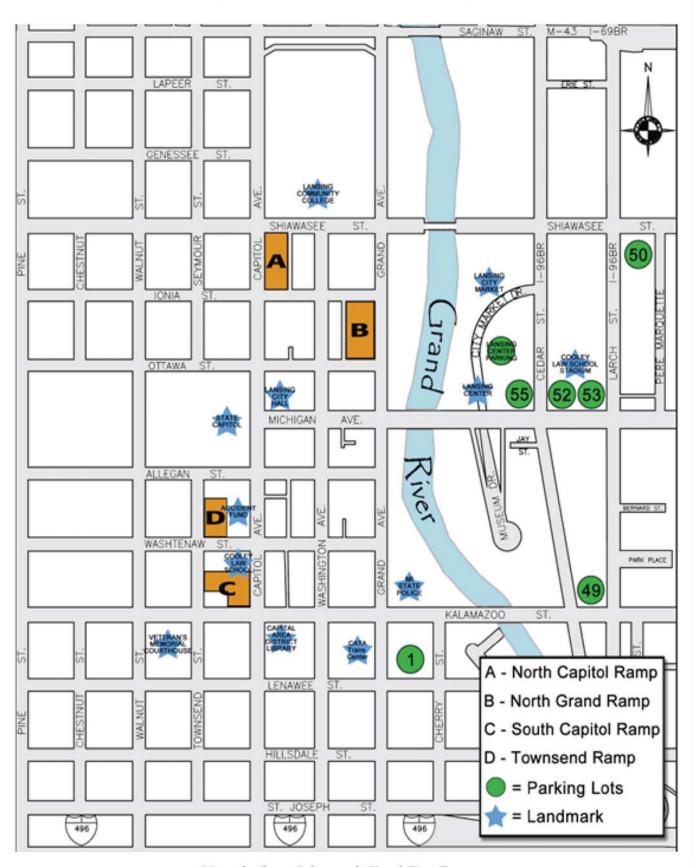
Photo credit : Google Images

Information : Traveling Through Time A Guide to Michigan's Historical Markers by Laura Rose Ashlee

Timeline : Through the Years 1847-1997 A pictorial History of Greater Lansing by Linda Peckham & Ray Walsh

Created By : Priyamvada Kayal

#### **LANSING PARKING MAP**



Many thanks to: Priyamvada Kayal, Tom Truscott, The Lansing Parking Office, and the Lansing Historic District Commission